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091232Z Feb 01

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INFO	LOG-00	NP-00	AID-00	AMAD-00	ACQ-00	CIAE-00	DINT-00
	DODE-00	DOTS-00	SRPP-00	DS-00	EB-00	EUR-00	FAAE-00
	FBIE-00	VC-00	H-01	TEDE-00	INR-00	IO-00	L-00
	VCE-00	AC-01	NSAE-00	OIC-02	OMB-01	OPIC-01	PA-00
	PM-00	PRS-00	ACE-00	P-00	SP-00	IRM-00	STR-00
	TRSE-00	USIE-00	R-00	PMB-00	DSCC-00	PRM-01	DRL-02
	G-00	NFAT-00	SAS-00	/009W			

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FM AMEMBASSY HARARE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8202
INFO NSC WASHDC
SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 HARARE 000695

SIPDIS

NSC FOR SENIOR AFRICA DIRECTOR JENDAYI FRAZER
LONDON FOR GURNEY
PARIS FOR WILLIAMS
NAIROBI FOR PFLAUMER

E.O. 12958: DECL. 02/05/11

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SUBJECT: ALTERNATIVE WAR VETERANS' GROUP SEEKS TO RESTORE
GOOD NAME OF THOSE WHO WAGED THE LIBERATION STRUGGLE

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REF: HARARE 644

CLASSIFIED BY CHARGE D'AFFAIRES EARL IRVING. REASONS: 1.5
(B) AND (D).

SUMMARY

1. (C) WILFRED MHANDA, LEADER OF THE ZIMBABWE LIBERATORS' PLATFORM, A MEMBERSHIP ORGANIZATION SEEKING TO RESTORE THE GOOD NAME OF WAR VETERANS, TOLD CHARGE AND POLITICAL SECTION CHIEF ON FEBRUARY 8 THAT VERY FEW EX-COMBATANTS ARE INVOLVED IN THE GOVERNMENT'S EFFORTS TO COW OPPOSITION SUPPORTERS, THE JUDICIARY, AND THE INDEPENDENT MEDIA. THE MAN LEADING THE GOVERNMENT'S CAMPAIGN OF TERROR, ZANU-PF MP CHENJERAI HUNZVI, IS NOT A GENUINE WAR VETERAN AND DOES NOT REPRESENT THE INTERESTS OF MOST EX-COMBATANTS, ACCORDING TO MHANDA. SENIOR MILITARY OFFICERS HAVE TOLD MHANDA THAT HUNZVI COULD BE BROUGHT UNDER CONTROL IN FIVE MINUTES, SHOULD THE GOVERNMENT DECIDE TO DO SO. END SUMMARY.

2. (C) WILFRED MHANDA, LEADER OF THE ZIMBABWE LIBERATORS' PLATFORM, A MEMBERSHIP ASSOCIATION OF WAR VETERANS, CALLED ON THE CHARGE ON FEBRUARY 8. MHANDA WAS JOINED BY ADVISOR HAPPYSON NENJI. CHARGE WAS ACCOMPANIED BY POLITICAL SECTION CHIEF.

ZIMBABWE LIBERATORS' PLATFORM

3. (C) MHANDA SAID THE ZIMBABWE LIBERATORS' PLATFORM WAS
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FORMED TO WORK FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE FREEDOMS
ZIMBABWEANS FOUGHT FOR DURING THE WAR OF LIBERATION.
SPECIFICALLY, THE ORGANIZATION IS STRIVING TO RESTORE THE
GOOD NAME OF WAR VETERANS, TO ASSIST THEM IN BECOMING
ECONOMICALLY SUSTAINABLE, REDUCING THEIR VULNERABILITY TO
POLITICAL MANIPULATION, PRESSING FOR THE RESTORATION OF THE
RULE OF LAW AND DEVELOPMENT OF A NON-RACIAL DEMOCRACY.
APPROXIMATELY 500 EX-COMBATANTS HAVE PAID THEIR MEMBERSHIP
DUES IN THE ZLP, AND MHANDA FELT CONFIDENT THAT THAT NUMBER
WOULD INCREASE. NOTING THAT HIS ORGANIZATION CURRENTLY
CANNOT AFFORD OFFICE SPACE, MHANDA MADE A PITCH FOR
INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT, NOTING THAT, WITHOUT SUCH RESOURCES,
GROUPS LIKE HIS CANNOT PROVIDE AN EFFECTIVE ALTERNATIVE
VOICE AND CANNOT HOPE TO COMPETE FOR POLITICAL SPACE WITH A
GOVERNMENT WITH FULL ACCESS TO THE STATE MACHINERY.

VERY FEW WAR VETS INVOLVED IN MUGABE'S VIOLENT CAMPAIGN

4. (C) THE CHARGE SOLICITED MHANDA'S ASSESSMENT OF THE

ZIMBABWE NATIONAL LIBERATION WAR VETERANS ASSOCIATION (ZNLWVA) LED BY CHENJERAI "HITLER" HUNZVI, NOTING THAT HUNZVI AND HIS BAND OF WAR VETERANS HAVE PLAYED A LARGE ROLE IN BLACKENING ZIMBABWE'S INTERNATIONAL IMAGE. THE ZNLWVA, MHANDA REPLIED, IS NO LONGER A FUNCTIONING ORGANIZATION. IT HAS CEASED TO SERVE THE PURPOSE FOR WHICH IT WAS FOUNDED -- REPRESENTING THE INTERESTS OF EX-COMBATANTS -- BUT, RATHER, HAS BEEN HIJACKED BY PRESIDENT MUGABE TO BE USED AS A ZANU-PF MILITIA. HUNZVI, MHANDA CLAIMED, IS NOT HIMSELF A GENUINE EX-COMBATANT. HUNZVI HAS NO INDEPENDENT SUPPORT BASE AND, MHANDA ASSERTED, HAS BEEN
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GIVEN LITTLE ROOM FOR MANEUVER BY MUGABE. HUNZVI'S PRIMARY VALUE LIES IN GIVING PRESIDENT MUGABE PLAUSIBLE DENIABILITY BY SERVING AS THE PUBLIC FACE OF THE GOVERNMENT'S CAMPAIGN OF VIOLENCE AND INTIMIDATION. ACCORDING TO MHANDA, THE DECISION TO INVADE COMMERCIAL FARMS AND TO COW OPPOSITION SUPPORTERS WAS MADE BY PRESIDENT MUGABE AND HIS MILITARY SERVICE CHIEFS, NOT BY HUNZVI.

15. (C) MHANDA INSISTED THAT VERY FEW OF ZIMBABWE'S APPROXIMATELY 40,000 WAR VETERANS ARE WORKING WITH HUNZVI AND HIS THUGS. ABOUT HALF OF THE EX-COMBATANTS ARE STILL SERVING IN THE ARMY, WHILE MOST OF THE REMAINING 20,000 ARE GAINFULLY EMPLOYED ELSEWHERE IN THE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTORS. MHANDA ESTIMATED THAT FEWER THAN 100 GENUINE LIBERATION WAR VETERANS, IN ADDITION TO LARGER NUMBERS OF ZANU-PF THUGS, ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR CARRYING OUT THE GOVERNMENT'S CAMPAIGN OF VIOLENCE AND INTIMIDATION AGAINST OPPOSITION SUPPORTERS, THE JUDICIARY, AND THE INDEPENDENT MEDIA, AS WELL AS OCCUPYING COMMERCIAL FARMS. THE MILITARY SERVICE CHIEFS HAVE TOLD MHANDA THEY COULD BRING HUNZVI UNDER CONTROL IN FIVE MINUTES. THE FACT THAT THEY HAVE NOT DONE SO, MHANDA SURMISED, CONFIRMS THAT HUNZVI AND HIS SHOCK TROOPS ARE CONTINUING TO SERVE A USEFUL ROLE FOR ZANU-PF. FURTHER EVIDENCE THAT HUNZVI AND THE "WAR VETERANS" ARE LITTLE MORE THAN PAWNS, OUR INTERLOCUTOR

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	USIE-00	PMB-00	DSCC-00	PRM-01	DRL-02	G-00	NFAT-00
	SAS-00	/009W					

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R 091232Z FEB 01
FM AMEMBASSY HARARE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8203
INFO NSC WASHDC
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 HARARE 000695

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NOTED, IS THE FACT THAT NONE OF THEM WERE GIVEN CABINET
RANK PORTFOLIOS OR WERE BROUGHT INTO THE ZANU-PF POLITBURO.

COMMENT

16. (C) WE FOUND MHANDA TO BE BRIGHT AND ARTICULATE, AND EMBARRASSED THAT THE REPUTATION OF "WAR VETERANS" HAS BEEN DRAGGED THROUGH THE MUD. HE WAS AT GREAT PAINS TO EXPLAIN THAT HITLER HUNZVI AND MOST OF THOSE UNDER HIS LEADERSHIP, NEVER FOUGHT IN THE LIBERATION WAR. THE SUBSTANCE OF MHANDA'S CONTENTION HAS BEEN WIDELY ACCEPTED IN ZIMBABWE, BUT THE ZLP LEADER WAS TROUBLED THAT BOTH DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL MEDIA CONTINUE TO DESCRIBE HUNZVI AND HIS HENCHMEN AS WAR VETERANS. MHANDA WAS CLEARLY CONTEMPTUOUS OF HUNZVI, AND WE CONSIDER CREDIBLE HIS DECLARATION THAT THE ZANU-PF MP DOES NOT SPEAK FOR THE MAJORITY OF WAR

VETERANS BUT, IN FACT, HAS DESTROYED THE ORGANIZATION SET UP TO REPRESENT THE INTERESTS OF EX-COMBATANTS.

17. (C) IT IS OBVIOUS THAT HUNZVI HAS AN IMPORTANT CONSTITUENCY OF ONE -- PRESIDENT MUGABE. THERE IS SIGNIFICANT EVIDENCE TO SUGGEST THAT THE PRESIDENT HAS GIVEN HUNZVI GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS WITH CARTE BLANCHE ON TACTICS TO DO WHAT IS NECESSARY TO ENSURE THE RULING PARTY WINS PARLIAMENTARY BY-ELECTIONS AND THE BIGGEST PRIZE OF ALL: THE 2002 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION. HUNZVI CLEARLY HAS TAKEN ON THAT RESPONSIBILITY WITH PATHOLOGICAL ENTHUSIASM, EVIDENT IN HIS SUPERVISION OF -- AND PERSONAL PARTICIPATION IN -- TERROR CAMPAIGNS AGAINST OPPOSITION SUPPORTERS IN ADVANCE OF BY-ELECTIONS IN MARONDERA AND BIKITA. HUNZVI
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HAS MOST RECENTLY TAKEN THE LEAD IN CARRYING OUT THE GOVERNMENT'S CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE JUDICIARY AND THE INDEPENDENT MEDIA. END COMMENT.

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